



USDA Foreign Agricultural Service

GAIN Report

Global Agriculture Information Network

Template Version 2.09

Voluntary Report - Public distribution

Date: 1/11/2008

GAIN Report Number: E48004

EU-27

Pest/Disease Occurrences

Update on the European animal disease situation 2008

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Report Highlights:

Foot and Mouth Disease, Bluetongue and Avian Influenza have developed beyond expectations in 2007. The impact on markets has, however, been limited to mostly smaller, temporarily intra-EU disruptions. These disease outbreaks run counter to the Animal Health Strategy 2007-2013. This report consolidates reporting on these animal disease developments in the EU from all EU FAS offices.

Includes PSD Changes: No
Includes Trade Matrix: No
Annual Report
Brussels USEU [BE2]
[E4]

2007 has been a bad year for the European animal health status. While the Bovine Spongiform Encephalopathy (BSE) situation has further improved and the fight against Classical Swine Fever (CSF) in the newer EU Member States (NMS) is celebrating success, Foot and Mouth Disease (FMD), Bluetongue (BT) and Avian Influenza (AI) H5N1 have demonstrated the EU's vulnerability for animal diseases. The advent and development of these animal diseases runs counter the EU's desired policy for animal disease prevention as stated in the [Animal Health Strategy 2007-2013](#)¹ (see GAIN [E47015](#)², [E47096](#)³ and [E47110](#)⁴).

Foot and Mouth Disease in the United Kingdom (UK)

In the second half of 2007, the United Kingdom suffered from an outbreak of FMD, which apparently resulted from a biosecurity breach at Pirbright laboratories as a result of weak maintenance of wastewater discharges. In total, six cases of FMD were identified in August and September 2007 in the broader vicinity of the facility. Because no further outbreaks occurred, all restrictions, including for export, were lifted as of December 31, 2007. Details on this latest situation are available from the [DEFRA website](#)⁵. While the UK escaped a major disaster like the 2002 FMD outbreak and meat exports were only disrupted in a limited way, the economic loss for the UK agriculture and meat sector have been massive.

Bluetongue spreads throughout Europe

Until the summer of 2006, BT was a tropical disease that occasionally made inroads into the Mediterranean countries of the EU with only few local consequences. However, in 2006 a BT strain of serotype 8 seemed to have adapted to temperate host mosquitoes and a new BT epidemic started in the east of Belgium, which rapidly spread to neighboring Germany, The Netherlands and France. The winter of 2007 was extremely mild and soon in 2007 it became clear that the virus had survived winter. A spectacular expansion of the disease continued through the summer and autumn of 2007 as no vaccine was available to stop the disease. BT outbreaks of this serotype 8 strain were identified from the UK to Poland and the Czech Republic, and from Denmark to the center of France by the end of 2007. Other BT serotypes have also made considerable progress in invading the Mediterranean EU MS.

The impact of the BT epidemic on EU meat trade is very limited, because meat is not infected by BT. Also, EU exports of susceptible living animals had already considerably decreased as a result of animal welfare constraints. Intra-EU trade has been hampered because of the increase in administrative burden to transport animals within the infected areas. This serotype 8 BT is, however, having an important economic impact because of its relatively important mortality. Mortality in sheep is over 50 percent, while reports of mortality in cattle, especially for weaker animals like calving cows, indicate doubled mortality of vulnerable cattle from normal levels. Together with a decrease in milk productivity, this BT epidemic is held co-responsible for below quota milk production in the most heavily affected MS. Unless an effective vaccine becomes available in early 2008, it can be anticipated that this BT epidemic will further spread and become endemic in a large part of the EU. The economic impact is also expected to increase exponentially, particularly for sheep breeders if the disease were to invade the UK sheep flocks.

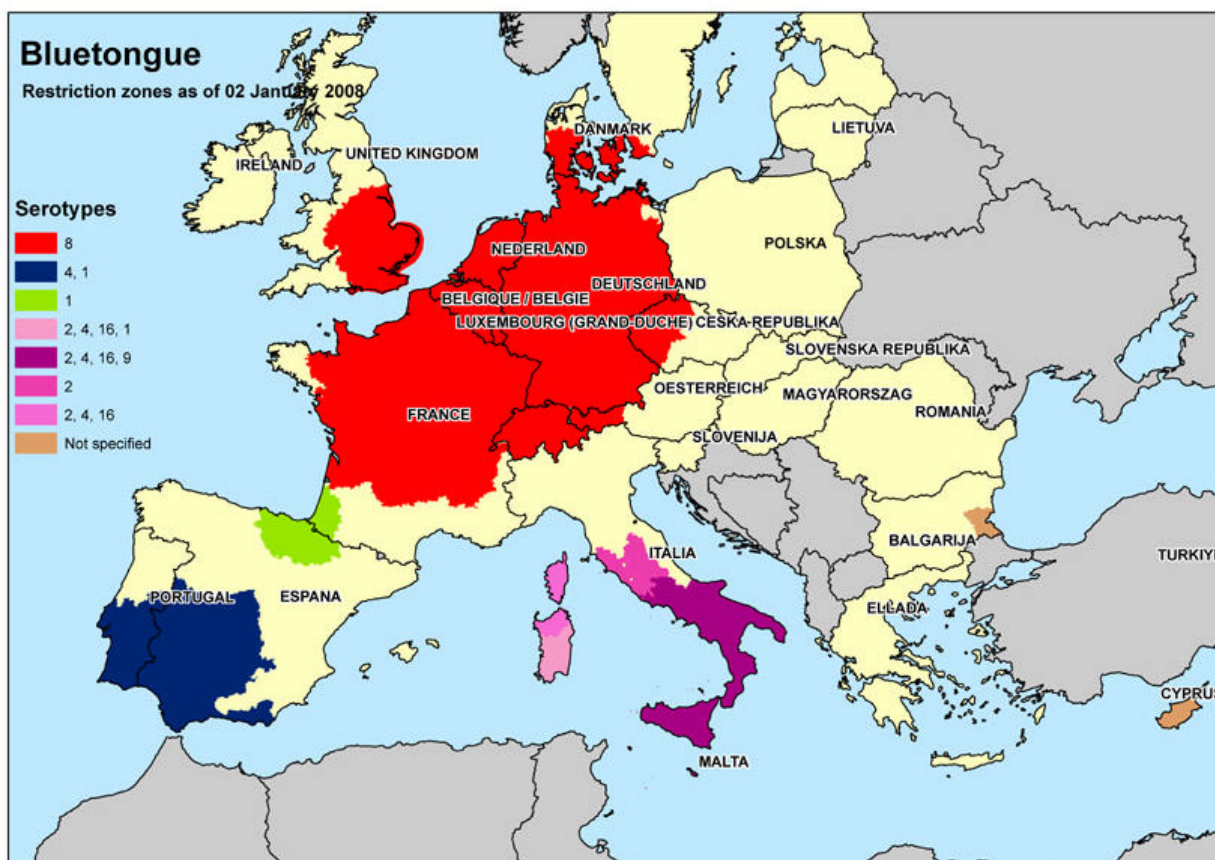
¹ http://ec.europa.eu/food/animal/diseases/strategy/index_en.htm

² <http://www.fas.usda.gov/gainfiles/200702/146280287.pdf>

³ <http://www.fas.usda.gov/gainfiles/200711/146292905.pdf>

⁴ <http://www.fas.usda.gov/gainfiles/200712/146293309.doc>

⁵ <http://www.defra.gov.uk/animalh/diseases/fmd/latest-situation/index.htm>



Source: DGSANCO⁶

Is Avian Influenza here to stay?

After initial outbreaks of AI H5N1 led consumers in southern Europe to a confidence crisis in poultry meat in the winter of 2006, reports of AI outbreaks have become familiar to consumers. Strict discipline by poultry producers in the application of biosecurity measures has kept AI outbreaks in commercial poultry production to a strict minimum. The majority of outbreaks in various EU MS have been in small backyard flocks, which are exposed to contact with wild birds. While most cases of AI H5N1 infections occurred in Germany and the NMS, occasionally infections have been discovered in France and the UK.

The impact of AI H5N1 on European poultry markets in 2007 has been fairly low because most outbreaks occurred in economically insignificant flocks. However, throughout 2007 EU poultry producers have kept production tight in order to avoid overproduction and major problems in case of important AI outbreaks. The production limitation was further mandated by the increased feeding costs and the expectations of increased imports as a result of the newly implemented TRQs, which resulted from the WTO case on poultry tariffs⁷. As a result, EU poultry prices remained at a high level and poultry production remained profitable. The continued threat of AI H5N1, however, hangs like a sword over the sector, which is very aware that no mistakes on biosecurity are allowed.

⁶

http://ec.europa.eu/food/animal/diseases/controlmeasures/BlueTongue_RestrictedZones.jpg

⁷ http://www.wto.org/english/tratop_e/dispu_e/cases_e/ds269_e.htm

Other diseases

BSE/TSE

While BSE in cattle herds seems to be under control and incidences of BSE are rapidly decreasing in all EU MS, the appearance of increasing numbers of atypical TSE cases in sheep and goats have drawn the attention of the EC, which has stepped up the control measures for these small ruminants.

Classical Swine Fever

The newly acceded MS in 2004 have made good progress in eradicating CSF, although infected wild boar populations in remote mountainous areas occasionally continue to cause CSF outbreaks in pig farms. The newest MS, Bulgaria and Romania, faced more serious outbreaks of CSF in 2007 and are therefore not eligible to export pigs and pork to the EU. Neighboring MS are also very concerned to bring CSF under control through vaccination programs in these newest MS, because of the threat for their pig farms.

Animal Disease Notification System

EU MS report to the EC on animal disease monitoring and outbreaks through the Animal Disease Notification System (ADNS). Comprehensive and regularly updated data on the various disease situations in the different EU MS is available online at the [ADNS website](http://ec.europa.eu/food/animal/diseases/adns/index_en.htm)⁸.

List of reports from USEU Brussels and EU FAS posts about animal disease monitoring and outbreaks in the EU:

Report Number	Title	Date Released
E47110	European Commission approves €187 million to fight animal diseases in 2008	December 24,07
E47096	EC adopts Community Animal Health Policy 2007-13	November 5,07
E47079	EU Midyear 2007 BSE update	September 7,07
E47050	EC Regulation sets targets for salmonella prevalence in broiler flocks	June 19, 07
E47017	BSE update on the EU situation in 2006	March 10, 07
E47015	EU Community Animal Health Policy (CAHP) Strategy 2007-2013	February 27, 07
Foot and Mouth Disease		
UK7027	Latest FMD situation in the UK	September 25, 07
UK7024	Update on UK outbreak of FMD	September 18, 07
UK7023	UK Confirms New Case of FMD on Cattle Farm	September 12, 07
UK7020	Foot & Mouth Disease – recovery timetable, the economic impact and who pays	August 21, 07

⁸ http://ec.europa.eu/food/animal/diseases/adns/index_en.htm

Report Number	Title	Date Released
UK7019	UK Foot and Mouth Update 2	August 19, 07
UK7018	UK Foot & Mouth Disease update	August 8, 07
UK7017	UK confirms case of FMD on cattle farm	August 6, 07
GM7035	Germany's Reaction to FMD in the U.K.	August 10, 07
Bluetongue		
FR7034	Half of France hit by Blue Tongue Disease, Cattle Exports Impacted	December 7, 07
GM7045	Bluetongue Update: Disease continues to Spread in Germany	October 24, 07
GM7028	Update on Bluetongue Disease in Germany	July 13, 07
UK7028	Bluetongue outbreak adds to the UK's Foot & Mouth Disease woes	October 3, 07
UK7026	First ever case of bluetongue confirmed in the UK	September 24, 07
Avian Influenza		
GM7060	AI update: Two more cases on small non-commercial poultry operations	January 8, 08
GM7059	AI update: New case on non-commercial poultry operation	December 24, 07
GM7055	AI update	December 18, 07
GM7040	AI: Outbreak in Commercial Duck Farm	August 30, 07
GM7030	AI update: Total Number Rises to 240 Wild Birds, One Goose on Backyard Farm	July 19, 07
GM7025	AI Re-appears in Wild Birds	June 28, 07
PL7062	Highly Pathogenic Avian Influenza Update and Market Implications	January 2, 08
PL7059	Avian Influenza H5N1 Outbreak Widens	December 14, 07
PL7058	New Avian Influenza H5N1 Outbreak in Poland	December 14, 07
PL7057	Update on AI Outbreak in Poland	December 10, 07
PL7056	Outbreak of Highly Pathogenic Avian Influenza	December 6, 07
PL7022	Avian Influenza Update Report for Poland	May 11, 07
RO8001	Avian Influenza (AI) – Outbreak eradication	January 8, 08
RO7015	Avian Influenza (AI) outbreak confirmed in Romania	December 5, 07
UK7035	UK confirms highly pathogenic Avian Influenza H5N1 in free range turkey flock	November 20, 07
FR7021	Avian Flu confirmed in Three Dead Wild Swans in Eastern France	August 21, 07

Report Number	Title	Date Released
HU7003	Second Case of Avian Influenza Confirmed in Hungary	February 1, 07
HU7002	Hungary Announces Suspected Case of Avian Influenza in Commercial Poultry	January 30, 07
Other diseases		
EN7004	Update on Newcastle Disease Outbreak	December 4, 07
EN7003	Newcastle Disease Outbreak	November 14, 07
BU7022	Animal health challenges for the Bulgarian pork sector	August 1, 07
SW7011	Sweden Reports its First PRRS Case	July 24, 07
GM7004	BSE in Germany - Update Covering 2006	February 1, 07
These reports can be accessed through our website http://useu.usmission.gov/agri/ or through the FAS website http://www.fas.usda.gov/scriptsw/attacherep/default.asp .		

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